




Speech By
Hon. Leeanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Northern Queensland Economic Summit

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation) (10.03 am): It gives me great pleasure to update the House on the Palaszczuk government's Northern Queensland Economic Summit, which was held last week in Cairns. As Minister for Science and Innovation, the summit was an opportunity for me to talk to investors about the current and future potential of North Queensland as a key innovation, entrepreneurial and research hub in the Asia-Pacific. Leading businesses and global investors can have a great deal of confidence that North Queensland will be at the centre of new opportunities in the knowledge economy. We have world-leading talent and a highly regarded university system where cutting-edge research is finding new vaccines and treatments for diseases of the tropics including dengue fever, malaria and rheumatic fever.

Our expertise is not confined to life sciences: we can also play a crucial role in terms of emerging industries and technologies. Our businesses and researchers are at the forefront of using the power of platforms, sensors, robotics, autonomous vehicles, big data and analytics to increase productivity. We have our rich biodiversity. Just one hectare of the Daintree is home to more flowering tree species than in all of temperate North America. Together with the knowledge of many thousands of generations, this is a unique basis to explore new treatments and growth in emerging markets such as nutraceuticals. North Queensland also offers tremendous benefits as an innovation hub and a key gateway into rapidly expanding global markets. We share time zones with key Asian markets and have long-established collaborative R and D partnerships with the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the Chinese ministry of science and technology and the Indian ministry of biotechnology.

Business can have confidence in a government that is determined to drive growth in the knowledge economy. The Palaszczuk government will strongly back entrepreneurs, businesses, investors and researchers who are determined to realise opportunities through our \$180 million Advance Queensland initiative, which is creating the knowledge based jobs of the future. Research and education are vitally important to North Queensland's future, but supporting the evolving innovation culture is also a key to success. That is why my department will shortly be rolling out a range of programs to support new start-ups in North Queensland and to help them to thrive in global markets. The future looks very bright indeed for the region and all of Queensland.